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## Special Interests Defeat Education Reforms that Threatened The Status Quo

### President Clinton Vetoes Education Savings and School Excellence Act

By vetoing bipartisan education reform legislation, President Clinton has chosen to side with the special interests over American families. His decision demonstrates, once again, that America's education policy remains hostage to special interests which are dedicated to protecting the current, failed, system rather than improving education for our kids. His veto means that:

- ▶ 14 million families — a majority of whom are low- and middle-income families — **will not** be able to open education savings accounts to pay education expenses for kindergarten through high school;
- ▶ \$12 billion over the next 10 years **will not** be saved for educational needs — resources ranging from textbooks to tutoring to tuition;
- ▶ 1 million college students **will not** receive tax relief for education benefits from state pre-paid tuition plans;
- ▶ 1 million workers **will not** benefit from employer-provided educational assistance;
- ▶ many small and rural school districts **will not** receive additional assistance to build public schools;
- ▶ Reading Excellence, a literacy program endorsed by the President, **will not** be available to help train teachers to teach reading; and
- ▶ a teacher testing and merit pay program **will not** be implemented to test teachers for competence and reward star teachers with merit pay.

President Clinton's assertion that education savings accounts would "divert resources from public education" is simply wrong. The vetoed bill did not affect a single penny of federal funding for elementary and secondary education. Moreover, money saved in these accounts could be used to pay for expenses in public as well as private schools.

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